

Remarks

The Office action dated May 22, 2002 has been carefully reviewed. New claims 40 and 41 have been added. Claims 1, 4, 13, 14, 15, 25-34, and 38 have been amended. Claims 2-4, 5-12, and 16-24, 35-37, and 39 are also pending. Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the above amendments and the remarks below is respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks Examiner Choi for the courtesies extended to his representative, Karen G. Horowitz (Reg. No. 35,199), during the interview granted on July 8, 2002. The comments made during the interview in support of allowance are incorporated herein.

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the allowability of claims 4-8 if the claims were rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant also acknowledges with appreciation the allowability of claims 15-18 if rewritten to overcome the 35 U.S.C. § 112 rejection set forth in the Office action and to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Because, as discussed below, the claims from which these claims depend are allowable, these claims should be allowable in dependent form.

As mentioned above, claims 1, 4, 13, 14, 15, 25-34, and 38 have been amended. The amendments have not changed or affected the scope of the claims. Claims 4, 13, 14, 33, and 34 have been amended for stylistic purposes only. As discussed in greater detail below, claims 1, 14, and 15 have been amended to clarify limitations already in the claims. Independent claim 25 has been amended to cancel unnecessary recitations and to delete reference to a razor "system." Claims 26-32 have similarly been amended to delete unnecessary reference to a razor "system." Independent claim 38 has been amended to delete unnecessary recitation of "the step of." The specification has also been amended, but only to correct a typographical error. No new matter has been added.

35 U.S.C. § 112 Rejections

Claims 15-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

More particularly, the Examiner stated that claim 15 is not clear as to what structure is set forth by "said connector assembly includes at least one post with a pin extending therefrom and a cutout for receiving said at least one post." Further the Examiner stated that it is unclear what elements are included in the connector assembly. Claim 15 has been amended to recite elements of the "connector assembly" recited in independent claim 14. In view of the amendments to claim 15, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 is completely clear under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

It is respectfully requested that the 35 U.S.C. § 112 rejection of claims 15-18 be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections

Claims 1-3, 9, 11-14, 19-22, and 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,311,400 to Hawes et al. ("Hawes"). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons that follow.

Claim 1, as amended, recites "a biasing element spaced apart and separate from said connector assembly and disposed between said shaving head and said handle." Claim 1, as amended, also clarifies that the biasing element biases the shaving head into a rest position against a "first movement" toward and away from the handle. The Examiner has identified engaging portions 14, pivot pins 15, socket journals 15A, hub 20, and leaf spring 24 of Hawes as a "connector assembly." The Examiner also has identified leaf spring 23 and spring element 18 as "biasing elements." However, elements 23 and 18, which the Examiner identified as biasing elements, are not separate and spaced apart from elements 14, 15, 15A, 20, and 24, which the Examiner has identified as the connector assembly. Leaf spring 23 connects leaf spring 24 and hub 20, and spring element 18 is integrally formed with engaging portion 14. Therefore, Hawes does not disclose all of the elements of claim 1 and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 14, as amended, recites a connector assembly having a "head-engaging element and a handle-engaging element [that] are moveable with respect to each other." The elements the Examiner identified in Hawes as a "head-engaging element" and a "handle-

engaging element” are not “moveable with respect to each other” since socket journals 15A engage pivot pins 15 in a manner that only allows the pivot pins 15 to pivot within journals 15A, but not to move with respect to journals 15A (as illustrated in Fig. 4). Therefore, Hawes does not disclose all of the elements of claim 14 of the present invention, and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Reconsideration and allowance of independent claims 1 and 14 and all claims depending therefrom are respectfully requested.

Claims Withdrawn from Consideration

Claims 10, 23, and 25-39 were withdrawn from consideration.

Because claims 10 and 23 depend from allowable independent claims, these claims should also be allowable.

It is respectfully submitted that independent claim 25, as amended, and dependent claims 26-32, also read on the elected species. The limitation in claim 25 recited by the Examiner as not reading on the elected species has been deleted from claim 25 as being unnecessary for patentability (without admitting such limitation does or does not read on the elected species). However, even with the deleted limitation, claim 25 does not require that the cartridge-engaging element be a part of the handle and not a separate element as shown in Species A. For example, on page 8, lines 17-30, the specification states that the head-engaging elements and the handle-engaging elements may be formed in any desired shape and/or configuration which enables floating movement of shaving head 22 with respect to handle 24. Whether or not the head-engaging element is a part of or is separable from the handle is irrelevant to the allowability of claim 25 in view of Hawes since Hawes teaches away from removeable coupling. (See Hawes column 4, lines 52-54). Accordingly, independent claim 25 and all claims depending therefrom are allowable over Hawes.

Claim 33 and dependent claims 34-37 also read on the elected species. The Examiner stated that claim 33 does not read on the elected species because claim 33 calls for directly coupling of the shaving head to the handle which indicates that a head-engaging element is part of the handle and not a separate element which can be detached from the handle as shown in Species A. Applicant respectfully disagrees. The limitation in claim 33 recited by the Examiner as not reading on the elected species has been deleted from claim 33 as being unnecessary for patentability (without admitting such limitation does or does not read on the

elected species). However, even with the deleted limitation, claim 33 does not indicate what the Examiner has stated. As stated on page 8, lines 17-30, of the specification, the head-engaging elements and the handle-engaging elements may be formed in any desired shape and/or configuration which enable floating movement of shaving head 22 with respect to handle 24. Thus, claim 33 does not require that the cartridge-engaging element be a part of the handle and not a separate element. Also, it is irrelevant to the allowability of claim 33 in view of Hawes if the head-engaging element is a part of or is separable from the handle since claim 33 is patentable at least because the handle-engaging element and the head-engaging element are moveable with respect to each other.

Finally, with respect to claims 38 and 39, claim 38 should be allowable in view of on the allowability of claim 4. Since the limitations in claim 4 regarding a cutout having dimensions greater than the dimensions of the at least one insertion element reads on the elected species, the limitations in claim 38 regarding the increased dimensions of the cutout read on the elected species as well.

Therefore, reconsideration and allowance of claims 10, 23, and 25-39 are respectfully requested.

New Claims

New claim 40 has been added to recite a method of moveably coupling a handle to a shaving head by insertion of at least one insertion element into a cutout having greater dimensions than the insertion element. Because claim 40 recites a limitation similar to the limitation recited in allowable claim 4, claim 40 should also be allowable.

As discussed above, the Examiner indicated that claim 4 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, new claim 41 corresponds to claim 4, rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims and should now be allowable. Thus, new claim 41 should be allowable.


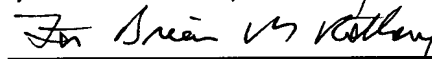
Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that all claims are now in condition for allowance, early notice of which would be appreciated. Should the Examiner disagree, then a personal or

telephonic interview is respectfully requested to discuss any remaining issues and expedite the allowance of this application.

No fee is believe due for this submission. Should any fees be required, please charge such fees to Pennie & Edmonds LLP's deposit account no. 16-1150.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures.

Appendix A
Marked-Up Version of the Claims.

Claims

The claims have been amended as follows, wherein inserted text is underlined and deleted text is in brackets.

What is claimed is:

1. (Amended) A razor, comprising:
 - a handle having a longitudinal axis;
 - a shaving head carrying at least one blade with at least one cutting edge and defining a transverse axis parallel to said at least one cutting edge;
 - a connector assembly movably coupling said handle to said shaving head; and
 - a biasing element spaced apart and separate from said connector assembly and disposed between said shaving head and said handle[, said biasing element biasing said shaving head into a rest position];wherein:
 - said connector assembly permits said shaving head to exhibit a first movement toward and away from said handle into and out of said rest position; and [wherein]
 - said biasing element biases said shaving head into a rest position against said first movement.
4. (Amended) A razor as in claim 2, wherein [the] said connector assembly includes at least one insertion element and at least one cutout shaped to receive said at least one insertion element, wherein said cutout has dimensions greater than the dimensions of said at least one insertion element to allow said first movement and said second movement.
13. (Amended) A razor as in claim 1, wherein when said shaving head is out of said [the] rest position, said transverse axis is perpendicular or oblique to said longitudinal axis depending on the degree and location of at least one force applied to said shaving head.
14. (Amended) A razor, comprising:
 - a handle having a first end, a spaced second end, and a longitudinal axis extending between said first and second ends;

a shaving head carrying at least one blade with at least one cutting edge and defining a transverse axis parallel to said at least one cutting edge;

a connector assembly comprising a head-engaging element and a handle-engaging element movably coupling said handle to said shaving head; and

a biasing element biasing said shaving head into a rest position, said biasing element [and said head-engaging element being disposed only at said first end of said handle and formed as a single piece] formed integrally with said first end of said handle;

wherein said [connector assembly] head-engaging element and handle-engaging element move with respect to each other to permit[s] said shaving head to exhibit a first movement toward and away from said handle.

15. (Amended) A razor as in claim 14, wherein:

one of said [connector assembly includes] head-engaging element and said handle-engaging element comprises at least one post with a pin extending therefrom and the other comprises a cutout for receiving said at least one pin; and

said cutout has dimensions greater than the dimensions of said pin received therein to allow movement of said shaving head toward and away from said handle and pivoting of said shaving head upward and downward about a pivot axis parallel to said transverse axis.

25. (Amended) A razor [system] comprising:

a handle;

a razor cartridge carrying at least one blade with at least one cutting edge and defining a transverse axis parallel to said at least one cutting edge, said razor cartridge having a longitudinal axis perpendicular to said transverse axis; and

a connector assembly provided between said handle and said razor cartridge to couple said razor cartridge removably to said handle [for ready decoupling of said razor cartridge from said handle for disposal of said razor cartridge and replacement with another razor cartridge];

wherein:

said connector assembly includes a cartridge-engaging element on said handle and a handle-engaging element on said razor cartridge[, said cartridge-engaging element and said handle-engaging element being configured to be removably coupled together without use of a separate connection element to couple said razor cartridge and said handle together]; and

said cartridge-engaging element and said handle-engaging element are configured to permit said razor cartridge simultaneously and independently to pivot about said transverse axis in a pitching movement, to move toward and away from said handle with said transverse axis remaining in the same orientation in a cushioning movement, and to pivot about said razor cartridge longitudinal axis in a rolling movement.

26. (Amended) A razor [system] as in claim 25, further comprising a biasing element biasing said razor cartridge into a rest position once a force causing one or more of said pitching, cushioning, and rolling movements is removed.

27. (Amended) A razor [system] as in claim 26, wherein said biasing element is spaced from said connector assembly.

28. (Amended) A razor [system] as in claim 26, wherein said biasing element is a spring-loaded tongue.

29. (Amended) A razor [system] as in claim 25, wherein one of said cartridge-engaging element and said handle-engaging element is an insertion element and the other of said cartridge-engaging element and said handle-engaging element is at least one cutout shaped to receive said insertion element.

30. (Amended) A razor [system] as in claim 29, wherein said insertion element includes a post with a pin extending transversely therefrom shaped for insertion into said cutout.

31. (Amended) A razor [system] as in claim 29, wherein:

said post and pin include a first post having a first pin and a second post having a second pin;

said at least one cutout includes a first cutout for receiving said first pin and a second cutout for receiving said second pin; and

said first and second posts are resiliently movable with respect to each other to facilitate insertion into and removal of said first and second pins from said first and second cutouts, respectively.

32. (Amended) A razor [system] as in claim 31, further including at least one button coupled to at least one of said first and second posts to move said at least one of said first and second posts upon movement of said button.

33. (Amended) A razor comprising:

a handle;

a shaving head carrying at least one blade with at least one cutting edge and defining a transverse axis parallel to said at least one cutting edge and a longitudinal axis perpendicular to said transverse axis; and

a connector assembly comprising a head-engaging element and a handle-engaging element movably coupling said shaving handle to said head upon coupling said head-engaging element and said handle-engaging element together;

wherein said head-engaging element and said handle-engaging element are:
configured for insertion of one into the other to result directly in coupling of said shaving head to said handle; and

[are] movable with respect to each other when coupled together to permit said shaving head simultaneously and independently to pivot about said transverse axis in a pitching movement, to move toward and away from said handle with said transverse axis remaining in the same orientation in a cushioning movement, and to pivot about said shaving head longitudinal axis in a rolling movement.

34. (Amended) A razor as in claim 33, further comprising a biasing element biasing [the] said shaving head into a rest position.

38. (Amended) A method of modifying a razor having a shaving head movably coupled to a handle to increase the degree of freedom of movement between the shaving head and the handle, the shaving head carrying at least one blade with at least one cutting edge and having a transverse axis parallel to the at least one cutting edge and a longitudinal axis perpendicular to the transverse axis, the shaving head being movably coupled to the handle for pivoting about the transverse axis by insertion of an insertion element on one of the handle and shaving head into a hole in the other of the handle and shaving head, said method comprising [the step of]:

increasing the size of the hole to form a cutout to increase the mobility of the insertion element therein to permit cushioning movement of the shaving head toward and

away from the handle and rolling movement of the shaving head about the transverse axis thereof in addition to the pivoting movement about the transverse axis.

Appendix B

Marked Up Version of the Specification

The paragraph beginning on page 10, line 14, and ending on page 10, line 25, was revised as follows, wherein inserted text is underlined and deleted text is in brackets:

- - Referring to the exemplary embodiment as shown in Fig. 8, to engage shaving head 22 with neck piece 34 to form razor 20, posts 80a and 80b are flexed inwardly toward each other and pins 84a and 84b are inserted into cutouts 62. Thus, posts 80a, 80b and pins 84a, 84b form a head-engaging element for engaging cutouts 62 of connection members 52a, 52b, which together form a handle-engaging element to connect head 22 movably to handle 24. Once inserted into cutouts 62, pins 84a and 84b are retained therein by respective members 60. Thus, neck piece 34 is directly connected to and in contact with head 22. In addition, cam surfaces 88a and 88b of leaf springs 82a and 82b contact plateau-like projection 48 to bias head 22 into a rest position. It will be appreciated that projection 48 may be flush with base 44, depending on the configuration of the biasing element. Shaving head 22 is thereby movably and releasably coupled to handle [22] 24 via neck piece 34 for movement about or along more than one axis, as discussed in detail below. - -